

CLAIMS

- 5 1. A method of providing a query, the method comprising the steps of:
selecting at least one visual representation of a search object;
dropping the at least one visual representation of the search object
onto at least one visual representation corresponding to a domain object; and
in response to the dropping step, providing a query.
- 10 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
in response to the provided query, searching at least one collection of
information; and
in response to the search of the at least one collection of information,
providing at least one visual representation of a result set object.
- 15 3. The method of claim 2 wherein the visual representation of the result set
object indicates whether at least one match was found as a result of the search.
- 20 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the visual representation of the search
object comprises a visual representation of an item sought.
- 25 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the visual representation of the domain
object comprises a visual representation of an action to indicate a context for a
search.
- 30 6. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of formulating a text
search query.
7. The method of claim 6, further comprising the step of sending the text
search query to at least one search engine.

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9. A system comprising:
a graphical user interface;
a graphical user interface manager communicatively coupled to the graphical user interface;
- 5 a query formulator, communicatively coupled to the graphical user interface manager, and responsive to a selected at least one visual representation of a search object being dropped onto at least one selected visual representation of a domain object to provide a query;
a query initiator, communicatively coupled to the query formulator to initiate a query request in response to the provided query;
- 10 a lookup system, communicatively coupled to the query initiator, for providing a search result in response to receiving the query request; and
a result set manager, communicatively coupled to the graphical user interface manager, to the query initiator, and to the lookup system, for providing a visual representation of a result set object to indicate the search result.
- 15
10. The system of claim 9, wherein the graphical user interface manager is structured to receive at least one user initiated command.
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11. The system of claim 9, wherein the lookup system provides access to at least one object repository.
12. The system of claim 9, wherein the search result provided from the lookup system comprises an object identifier for retrieving an object.
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13. The system of claim 9, wherein the graphical user interface manager comprises an event stacker structured to maintain a query stack.
14. The system of claim 13, wherein the event stacker is further structured to associate items in the query stack with pending query requests.
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15. The system of claim 9, wherein the query formulator is structured to provide a text search query.

16. The system of claim 9, wherein the query Initiator is structured to initiate a query request comprising an object search request.

17. The system of claim 9, wherein the result set manager is structured to correlate an at least one search result to an at least one query request.

18. The system of claim 9, further comprising an object mapper communicatively coupled to the graphical user interface manager, the query formulator, and the result set manager.

19. The system of claim 18, wherein the object mapper is further structured to map a selected object to a corresponding object identifier and a string representation.

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20. A computer readable medium including computer instructions for driving a graphical user interface, the computer instructions comprising instructions for:
selecting at least one visual representation of a search object;
dropping the at least one visual representation of the search object
5 onto at least one visual representation corresponding to a domain object; and
in response to the dropping step, providing a query.

21. The computer readable medium of claim 20, wherein the computer instructions further comprise the instructions for:

10 in response to the provided query, searching at least one collection of information; and

in response to the search of the at least one collection of information, providing at least one visual representation of a result set object.

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22. An apparatus comprising:
a graphical user interface;
a visual search query application;
an interface communicatively coupled to the visual search query
5 application; and
a search base interface communicatively coupled with the visual search
query application and the application programming interface for:
selecting at least one visual representation of a search object in the
graphical user interface;
10 dropping the at least one visual representation of the search object
onto at least one visual representation of a domain object; and
in response to dropping the at least one visual representation of the
search object onto at least one visual representation of a domain object,
providing a query request to the search base interface.
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23. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the interface communicatively coupled
to the visual search query application further comprises an application
programming interface.
- 20 24. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the search base interface sends the
query request to a database repository.
25. The apparatus of claim 24, wherein the data base repository is pre-
collected.
25
26. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the search base interface sends the
query request to at least one search engine.
27. The apparatus of claim 26, wherein the at least one search engine is
30 structured to search the world wide web.